

STARS AND STRIPES®

Wednesday, September 12, 2018

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Navy conducts 3 Middle East exercises

BY JASON BEHNKE
Stars and Stripes

MANAMA, Bahrain — The U.S. 5th Fleet is participating in three exercises in the Middle East focused on critical chokepoints in the region amid recent tensions at sea with Iran.

It's rare to have so many naval exercises going on in the area simultaneously, but "this isn't in response to any one threat or any potential threat," said Lt. Christina Gibson, spokeswoman for U.S. Navy Central Command. "It is to demonstrate that we are operating and capable to respond to threats, should they arise," she said.

The two-week Theater Amphibious Combat Rehearsal, which began Saturday, focuses on the Bab el Mandeb Strait, a chokepoint known as one of the most dangerous narrow waterways in the world.

In 2016, Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen fired rockets in a failed attack on two U.S. Navy warships just north of the strait. The area has been under threat from the Houthis since then, with attacks on several oil tankers and other commercial vessels.

The amphibious combat rehearsal normally takes place when a new amphibious ready group enters the 5th Fleet area of responsibility, which includes the Middle East and parts of the Indian Ocean. The

'The U.S. and our partners stand ready to ensure the freedom of navigation and free flow of commerce wherever international law allows.'

Vice Adm. Scott Stearney
5th Fleet commander

USS Essex ARG entered the area this month.

"The U.S. and our partners stand ready to ensure the freedom of navigation and free flow of commerce wherever international law allows," Vice Adm. Scott Stearney, 5th Fleet commander, said Sunday.

Iran has been known to practice anti-access naval tactics as part of its military strategy. In June, Tehran threatened to close the Strait of Hormuz, where much of the world's oil and natural gas transits.

"We are the ... guarantor of security of the waterway of the region throughout history," Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said in a June 22 speech. "Don't play with the lion's tail; you will regret it."

Rouhani's threat came about a month after President Donald Trump reinstated sanctions against Iran and pulled the U.S. out of an international agreement monitoring Iran's nuclear activities. Trump replied in an all-caps Twitter message that Iran should never threaten the U.S. again or it would suffer consequences "the likes of which few throughout history have ever seen before."

Meanwhile, more than 1,000 miles northwest of the amphibious rehearsal, the two-week Bright Star 18 exercise has been active since Saturday, with the U.S. and Egypt focusing on conventional and unconventional warfare in the Suez Canal.

Mine Countermeasures Exercise 18-3 is also underway, with the U.S. and U.K. operating in the Persian Gulf. That exercise takes place four times a year with the U.S. and U.K. navies, both of which have mine countermeasure ships and aircraft in the region.

"These quarterly exercises really enforce those relationships and the proficiency of operating together," said Lt. Cmdr. Robert J Toohig Jr., commanding officer of USS Dextrous.

Later this month, the Navy will drill in the Persian Gulf during an MK-60 Griffin missile exercise, which aims to combat surface threats and protect minesweepers and other coastal patrol ships in the region.

Navy hopes bonuses will keep officer posts filled

BY SCOTT WYLAND
Stars and Stripes

Senior submarine officers can receive as much as \$180,000 in signing bonuses under a new Navy plan to retain sailors with desired leadership skills.

Officers who have been commissioned at least 26 years and have overseen major submarine commands, such as a squadron or task force, are eligible for sizable extension bonuses, the Navy said in a memo earlier this month.

An eligible officer would receive \$45,000 a year for a two-to-

four-year contract and \$35,000 for a one-year contract.

The bonuses, which will be available to an estimated 50 officers a year, are part of the Navy's larger effort to keep senior leaders at the helm.

Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer has described the intense competition the Navy faces from the private sector and other military branches in recruiting and retaining qualified personnel.

"The Navy, the Army, Air Force ... are in a talent war and we are going to have to compete

with every single tool we have," he said in a March speech in Washington.

The Navy also recently began allowing chief petty officers willing to perform more sea duty and tough taskings to extend their service beyond the time when rank normally would force them to retire.

An E-7 normally must retire after 24 years, E-8s at 26 years and E-9s at 30 years of service.

A new policy change also lets the highest-ranking chiefs postpone their retirement.

Command master chief petty

officers, including those serving at one- or two-star commands, can remain two years past the current 30-year limit. Those serving at three- or four-star commands can stay a year longer than the 35-year limit of that rank.

Under the old "up or out" policy, servicemembers were expected to retire if they weren't promoted regularly.

Another change to the policy enables junior officers who haven't been promoted to stay in if they have sought-after skills.

VA: Don't extend benefits to Blue Water vets

BY NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie has come out against extending benefits to veterans who served off the coast during the Vietnam War, citing high costs and insufficient evidence that they were exposed to Agent Orange.

Wilkie urged senators in a letter Friday to reject legislation that would make health care and disability compensation available to approximately 90,000 "Blue Water" Navy veterans — those sailors aboard aircraft carriers, destroyers and other ships who contend they were exposed to Agent Orange through the ships' water systems. The dioxin-laden herbicide has been found to cause respiratory cancers, Parkinson's disease and heart disease, as well as other conditions.

The bill passed the House unanimously in June and was sent to the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee.

"We know it is incredibly dif-

ficult to hear from Blue Water veterans who are ailing and ill, and we have great empathy and compassion for these veterans and their families," Wilkie wrote to Senate VA committee members. "However, we urge the committee to consider the scientific evidence, impact on other veterans and costs associated with this legislation."

The VA is conducting a study to compare the health of deployed Vietnam War veterans, including Blue Water Navy veterans, with others of similar age who weren't deployed. Wilkie urged senators to wait until the study publishes in 2019 before deciding on the legislation.

Wilkie's stance deviates from that of former VA Secretary David Shulkin, who said last year that he was committed to extending benefits to Blue Water Navy veterans despite a lack of scientific evidence.

"It's too late for us to be able to get solid scientific evidence, so we just have to do the right thing," Shulkin said during a House hearing in October 2017. "There is no doubt our

Vietnam veterans have waited too long for us to bring this to resolution."

Wilkie also took issue with the method included in the bill to pay for the increased costs of the benefits. To make up the cost, the legislation raises fees for servicemembers and veterans who use the VA's home loan program.

The method wouldn't generate enough savings, Wilkie argued. He said the VA estimates the legislation would end up costing the agency \$5.5 billion — much more than the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated it would. Wilkie argued the CBO underestimated by thousands the number of veterans and dependents who would become eligible for VA services. Further, Wilkie wrote, the VA would need 803 new employees to implement the bill.

John Wells, a retired Navy officer, has been fighting on behalf of Blue Water Navy veterans since 2008 with the group Military-Veterans Advocacy. On Monday, he described

Wilkie's \$5.5 billion estimate as ludicrous. He said he felt "betrayed" by Wilkie, with whom he has been trying to meet for months.

The Senate VA committee discussed the legislation during a hearing Aug. 1. Committee members heard from Paul Lawrence, VA undersecretary of benefits, who said the bill would set a bad precedent for approving benefits for illnesses without proof that they were caused by military service.

The committee hasn't scheduled a vote for the bill and has provided no updates on it since the August hearing.

Rep. Tim Walz, of Minnesota, the ranking Democrat on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, said there were efforts underway to push the bill through Congress, even without the VA's support.

"I find the Trump administration's sudden rigid opposition to this bipartisan legislation difficult to comprehend," Walz said in a statement. "Our nation owes it to these veterans to get this done."

Mission Act gets funding under VA budget agreement

BY NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — After a dispute delayed negotiations on the Department of Veterans Affairs budget for fiscal 2019, lawmakers came to an agreement Monday for more than \$200 billion for the agency that includes funding for the new VA Mission Act — legislation that expands private-sector medical care for veterans.

The Office of Management and Budget estimated that implementing the Mission Act would create a \$1.6 billion shortfall in 2019 in the account used to pay for veterans' private-sector treatment. The Mission Act was signed into law with fanfare this summer, though President Donald Trump's administration asked Congress not to break spending caps to pay for it.

In the end, lawmakers shifted \$1.25 billion to cover some of the cost instead of approving new funding — a move some Democrats opposed.

Three veterans organizations came out Tuesday in favor of the plan, though they said Congress might have to appropriate more money for the Mission Act later if the VA hits a shortfall. During the past two years, the VA has been unable to estimate accurately the amount of money it requires to send veterans into the private sector.

"At the end of the day, the VFW wants Congress to do its job and ensure the VA has the money that it needs to properly implement the Mission Act," said Carlos Fuentes, a director with the Veterans of Foreign Wars. "What can be seen from this bill, for at least 2019, is the VA has the resources to imple-

ment [it]. Our hope is that if the VA comes back and says they need more money, that Congress fulfills that need."

Rep. Tim Walz, D-Minn., argued that because lawmakers didn't incorporate new funding for the Mission Act, Congress shouldn't fault the VA if it breaks spending caps.

"By no means are we done with our work," said Walz, the ranking Democrat on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. "The VA Mission Act still lacks a sustainable source of funding, and unless something is done, the program will face a funding shortfall in less than a year."

House and Senate negotiators released their agreement for the VA on Monday. In addition to the VA, the bill addresses spending for military construction, the Department of Energy, the legislative branch and other agen-

cies. The House is set to vote on the bill this week ahead of the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1.

The bill allots \$208.8 billion for the VA altogether, a historically high budget for the agency.

The VFW, along with Disabled American Veterans and Paralyzed Veterans of America, lauded the bill in a joint statement as providing "much-needed increases for veterans' health care and other critical programs, including new funding to begin implementing key provisions of the VA Mission Act."

It provides \$8.6 billion for mental health care programs, including \$206 million for suicide prevention efforts. It also sets aside \$1.1 billion for a massive project to overhaul the VA's electronic health record system.

US military bases brace for Florence

BY ROSE L. THAYER

Stars and Stripes

Leaders at military installations in Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina are adapting and adjusting their plans and preparations for Florence as the massive hurricane barrels toward the East Coast, shifting direction along the way.

Expected to arrive along the North Carolina coast by Friday morning, the massive storm is projected to bring winds exceeding 110 mph, and up to 40 inches of rain could occur in isolated areas.

For days, the Navy has moved people and ships ahead of the hurricane, and the Air Force and Army have been flying aircraft elsewhere as a safeguard. Some remaining Marines, meanwhile, are digging in their heels.

Florence is moving into a region with some of the most well-known military bases in the country, including Camp Lejeune and Fort Bragg in North Carolina, Naval Station Norfolk in Virginia and the Marine Corps Recruit Depot on Parris Island in South Carolina.

At least five military installations — Joint Base Langley-Eustis in Virginia, Joint Base

Charleston in South Carolina, Naval Station Norfolk, Camp Lejeune and Fort Bragg — have issued some form of evacuation, while another is calling residents back to base. The four states bracing for the worst — the Carolinas, Virginia and Maryland — now have a combined 6,800 National Guard members on active-duty helping with the evacuation of millions of coastal residents and preparing to support post-storm recovery.

Navy Command Region-Mid Atlantic issued emergency evacuation orders for its personnel residing in 14 counties of North Carolina and Zone A of Naval Station Norfolk, which includes some base housing.

However, with South Carolina lifting its mandatory evacuation of Beaufort County, home to Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, the base has terminated its evacuation orders. All personnel have until midnight Wednesday to return to the base, which is home to about 7,000 recruits and 1,500 permanent personnel.

“With any decision there’s a degree of risk,” Brig. Gen. James Glynn, commander Parris Island and the Eastern Recruiting Region, said in a video posted to Facebook. “We as-

essed the logistical efforts of moving all personnel to Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany (in Georgia) now exceed the efforts of remaining at Parris Island.”

Though bases in Virginia are beginning to feel some relief from Florence’s direction shift, terminations of evacuation plans have not been issued for Navy or Air Force personnel as of Wednesday morning.

An evacuation order remains in place for the Air Force’s Joint Base Charleston. At Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina, officials said they are remaining in place and are following the lead from local officials.

Charleston’s 24 C-17 transport aircraft left the base for Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, two other airports in that state and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio, said Air Force Maj. Lindy Singleton. Shaw’s fleet of F-16 fighter jets flew down to Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida.

Two of the largest installations in North Carolina, Camp Lejeune and Fort Bragg, have allowed people wanting to evacuate to do so with command approval. Otherwise, both installations plan to weather the storm.

Camp Lejeune is offering six shelters on the base, where

residents can ride out the storm. Nonessential personnel have been released through Monday.

Fort Bragg and Fort AP Hill have been designated as Federal Emergency Management Agency support and staging areas for hurricane response, the Army announced in a news release.

Officials at Fort Hood and Fort Bliss in Texas said they are preparing Black Hawks to help in the aftermath of the storm.

The Army also announced its Corps of Engineers has alerted personnel for deployment, to include temporary emergency power personnel. That includes one company from the 249th Engineer Battalion and a Deployable Tactical Operations Center vehicle.

In addition to the 6,800 National Guard members activated across the four states, another 16 states are readying personnel and equipment in anticipation of support to the affected region once the storm passes, said Kurt Rauschenberg, National Guard Bureau spokesman. That number will change rapidly as affected states tailor their response needs.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.

Mattis says Afghans boost troop vetting

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Afghan military has increased its vetting of local forces working with American troops as a result of recent insider attacks that killed two U.S. servicemembers, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Tuesday.

Mattis was making his first public comments about his meetings in Afghanistan last week when he raised the issue with President Ashraf Ghani amid increased concerns about Afghan forces attacking U.S. troops they work alongside.

Speaking to Pentagon reporters, Mattis said that Afghan leaders increased training for their troops and expanded security checks “to make certain we’re catching people who’ve been radicalized.”

Cpl. Joseph Maciel, of South Gate, Calif.,

was shot and killed and two others were wounded in July at Tarin Kowt in southern Uruzgan province. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy A. Bolyard, of Thornton, W.Va., was shot and killed and another servicemember was wounded by a member of the Afghan national police in eastern Logar province. The troops were all part of the 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade, which is spread out across Afghanistan to train and advise local forces.

Mattis made a brief, unannounced visit to Kabul on Friday to meet with government leaders and the new commander of U.S. and coalition forces, Army Gen. Scott Miller.

A key subject during his meetings, Mattis said, was the path to reconciliation with the Taliban and how to ensure that the warfighting campaign is sustained even as

peace talks are sought with the Taliban.

The U.S. has been increasing efforts to support reconciliation between the Taliban and the Afghan government, naming veteran diplomat Zalmay Khalilzad as a special adviser for the matter last week.

Mattis and other military leaders have talked more optimistically about the prospects for reconciliation, saying they are seeing greater support for the peace process around the country, including Taliban participation in a brief cease-fire in June.

Still, Mattis conceded that there has been little quantifiable data showing that the move to peace is advancing. The Taliban, he said, have so far not met three critical conditions: to stop killing people, break away from al-Qaida and abide by the country’s constitution.

Kidnapper's surprise release upsets Smart

Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — A woman convicted of helping a former street preacher kidnap Elizabeth Smart in 2002 will be freed from prison more than five years earlier than expected, a surprise decision that Smart called “incomprehensible” on Tuesday.

Wanda Barzee, 72, will be released Sept. 19 after the Utah Board of Pardons and Parole determined it had miscalculated the time she was required to serve in prison, board spokesman Greg Johnson said.

Barzee pleaded guilty to kidnapping Smart and helping keep her captive for nine months before the then-teenager was found and rescued.

Smart, now 30, said in a statement she was “surprised and disappointed” to learn

that Barzee will be freed next week. She said she’s exploring her options and plans to speak publicly in the coming days.

“It is incomprehensible how someone who has not cooperated with her mental health evaluations or risk assessments and someone who did not show up to her own parole hearing can be released into our community,” Smart said.

The board said previously that Barzee would be released in January 2024 after it denied her an early parole following a hearing that she chose not to attend. At that June hearing, the board said Barzee had refused to take a psychological exam.

At the same hearing, her attorney questioned the calculation of her release date. Lawyer Scott Williams said Tuesday he appreciates that the board reviewed it and

agreed with his assessment.

Williams said he’s not concerned about Barzee being a danger to the community, but declined to say why. Williams has said Barzee has been diagnosed with several mental illnesses.

Smart’s abduction from her Salt Lake City bedroom at knifepoint by a man who came in through an open kitchen window triggered waves of fear around the country.

Smart was found while walking with Barzee and Mitchell on a street in the suburb of Sandy, Utah, by people who recognized the couple from media reports.

Mitchell is serving a life sentence after being convicted of kidnapping and raping Smart. He and Barzee were married at one point.

Pope summons bishops for February summit

Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis is summoning the presidents of every bishops conference around the world for a February summit to discuss preventing clergy sex abuse and protecting children — evidence that he realizes the scandal is global and that inaction threatens to undermine his legacy.

Francis’ key cardinal advisers announced the decision Wednesday, a day before Francis meets with U.S. church leaders who have been deeply discredited by the latest accusations in the Catholic Church’s decades-long sex abuse and cover-up scandal.

The Feb. 21-24 meeting at the Vatican is believed to be the first of its kind, and signals a realization at the highest levels of the church that clergy sex abuse is a global problem and not restricted to the Anglo-Saxon world, as many church leaders have

long tried to insist.

Earlier this year, Francis faced what was then the worst crisis of his papacy when he repeatedly discredited victims of a notorious Chilean predator priest. He eventually admitted to “grave errors in judgment” and has taken steps to make amends, sanction guilty bishops and remake the Chilean episcopacy.

More recently, Francis’ papacy has been jolted by accusations from a retired Vatican ambassador that he rehabilitated a top American cardinal from sanctions imposed by Pope Benedict XVI for having molested and harassed adult seminarians.

The Vatican hasn’t responded to the accusations by Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, but has promised “clarifications” that presumably will come sometime after Francis’ meeting Thursday with the U.S. delegation.

The Vatican said Tuesday the meet-

ing would be headed by Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, head of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and also include Francis’ top sex abuse adviser, Cardinal Sean O’Malley.

Di Nardo has said he wants Francis to authorize a full-fledged Vatican investigation into ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, who was removed as cardinal in July after a credible accusation that he groped a teenager.

The Vatican has known since at least 2000 that McCarrick would invite seminarians to his New Jersey beach house and into his bed.

St. John Paul II made him archbishop of Washington and a cardinal in 2001, presumably because Vatican officials were impressed by his fundraising prowess and considered his past homosexual activity a mere “moral lapse” and not a gross abuse of power.

Job openings and quitting rate reach record highs

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. employers advertised the most jobs on record in July, and the number of workers quitting their jobs also hit a new all-time high.

Americans are increasingly taking advantage of a tight labor market to find new, often higher-paying jobs.

The Labor Department said Tuesday that the number of job openings rose 1.7 percent to 6.9 million, the most on record dating to late 2000. The number of people

quitting jumped 3 percent to 3.58 million, also a record.

With the unemployment rate near an 18-year low of 3.9 percent, businesses are increasingly desperate to find workers. Even as the number of available jobs rose, overall hiring was essentially flat, the report showed.

Still, last month employers added a healthy 201,000 jobs in August, according to the government’s monthly jobs report released Friday. The jump in job openings

in July suggests solid hiring will continue.

With the economy growing at a healthy clip and consumers spending freely, employers are optimistic about future demand and want to hire more. That appears to be finally pushing some employers to pay more, increasing wages.

According to Friday’s jobs report, average hourly pay rose 2.9 percent in August compared with a year earlier. That was the best annual gain since June 2009, when the Great Recession ended.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Restaurant's burger to get TV airtime

CT MANCHESTER — A Connecticut restaurant known for its unusual cheeseburgers is getting some national television exposure.

The Journal Inquirer reported that Shady Glen in Manchester will be featured in an upcoming episode of the Travel Channel's "Burger Land."

The restaurant is known for frying the cheese in its cheeseburgers until it is crispy.

The James Beard Foundation named the burger an "American classic," and Food Network Magazine has recognized Shady Glen's chocolate chip ice cream as Connecticut's best frozen dessert.

The "Burger Land" episode is expected to air in November.

Judge rejects 'lavish lifestyle' argument

MO KANSAS CITY — A judge rejected the claims of two men sued over a \$110 million sweepstakes and contest scheme that they need a combined \$43,000 a month in "living expenses."

The Kansas City Star reported that Judge Greg Kays said Kevin Brandes will need to live on \$10,000 a month, not the \$28,740 he sought. His business partner, William Graham, was pared back to \$8,000 a month from \$14,058.

The Federal Trade Commission and Missouri Attorney General Josh Hawley sued them in February. The federal complaints say their businesses had pitched million-dollar sweepstakes prizes that no one ever won and ran mail-in contests with virtually unsolvable top-prize puzzles.

Kays wrote in his order that money used to support a "lav-

ish lifestyle" would come out of money that could end up paying restitution to consumers.

Eatery calls bomb squad about grenade

SD GARY — The bomb squad was called to a restaurant in Gary after workers doing some remodeling work discovered a hand grenade.

The Deuel County Sheriff's Office said the grenade was found Monday at The Alibi. An employee removed the grenade from the premises before calling authorities.

The Argus Leader said deputies secured the area and called the Division of Criminal Investigation's bomb unit to dispose of the grenade. The sheriff's office said authorities were uncertain if the grenade would explode but treated it as if it would. Officials said the grenade is estimated to be at least 40 years old.

Cops' arrests lead to psychologist request

TX SAN ANTONIO — A Texas sheriff who's seen 18 deputies arrested this year on various charges said a staff psychologist will be hired to better screen applicants.

Bexar County Sheriff Javier Salazar is requesting that county commissioners set aside \$118,000 to fund the position.

Three deputies have been arrested in one recent week alone. Of the 18 arrested so far this year, 10 are accused of violent crimes such as assault, while five are charged with drunken driving.

Nearly all of those arrested worked in the county jail. Detention deputies undergo less training than patrol and other deputies.

School to paddle students as discipline

GA HEPHZIBAH — Paddling students is now a disciplinary policy at a Georgia charter school, and parents who don't consent have to agree to up to five days of suspension for their children instead.

WRDW-TV reported the Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics sent parents a letter last week asking permission to hit children with a wooden paddle. Superintendent Jody Boulineau said the kindergarten-through-ninth grade school has received a little more than 100 of the forms back, and a third of them give consent to use the paddle.

Boulineau said the corporal punishment won't be used often and that just the threat of it will be a deterrent.

The form says students will be spanked on the buttocks in an office with closed doors and shouldn't be struck more than three times.

Police: Officer fought at Little League game

NY NORTH GREENBUSH — Police in upstate New York said a Troy police officer with multiple excessive-force allegations got into a fight with another man at a Little League field over the weekend.

Officer Dominick Comitale, who was off-duty at the time, was charged Saturday with harassment at a Little League game in North Greenbush.

The Times Union of Albany reported that Comitale allegedly elbowed another man in the face during a dispute over field cleanup.

A Little League attorney said it will ask Comitale not to return to the league's fields.

Tiny town, residents resolve property issue

NV LAS VEGAS — The 10 residents of the rural western Nevada ghost town of Gold Point will finally have a chance to get ownership deeds to land they thought they bought years ago.

The Bureau of Land Management has announced plans to transfer ownership of the town site to Esmeralda County, ending a decadeslong property dispute, the Las Vegas Review-Journal reported last week.

Under the proposal, the county would pay the federal government \$82,000 for the 0.35-square-mile town site 185 miles northwest of Las Vegas.

The deal is set to be completed by the end of the year, after which the county plans to sell individual lots back to local residents.

The problem stems from public records that went missing or were never filed more than a century ago, casting a legal cloud over dozens of old parcels.

Officer, barbers hold back-to-school soiree

IL SPRINGFIELD — A Springfield police officer's idea to offer free haircuts developed into a community back-to-school soiree.

The (Springfield) State Journal-Register reported that police officer Lamar Moore's event recently entertained 300 kids with games and provided school supplies and backpacks.

Moore collected donations from other officers and emergency dispatchers. Barbers Dwy Rice and Seth Gregory had the free haircut idea and want to organize future events to help the community.

From wire reports

Your objective source for military news
updated 24/7 from bases
around the world.
Now online at www.stripes.com.

STARS AND STRIPES®

Buffaloes' LB keeping faith

Associated Press

BOULDER, Colo. — Davion Taylor might have been great in high school, if he had played in games rather than just practiced with his team.

Hard to really know.

The hints of the hybrid linebacker's talent, however, may just be presenting themselves at Colorado this season.

As a Seventh-day Adventist, Taylor observed the Sabbath from sundown on Fridays to sundown on Saturdays during his high school days by resting and worshipping. Meaning, he didn't play in Friday night games. So he didn't star at South Pike High in Mississippi and instead helped fill water bottles before games, then headed home for prayer.

He didn't give up on his dream, though.

Taylor adjusted his religious observances once he turned 18, attended Coahoma Community College, caught the eye of Colorado, and now everyone's seeing what South Pike High's best practice player looks like in the big time.

"I sometimes doubt myself since I didn't play high school ball. But I know I'm good enough," said the 6-foot-2, 220-pound Taylor, who had a fumble recovery in a win at Nebraska on Saturday as the Buffaloes moved to 2-0. "I know I made it here for a reason."

Taylor hails from Magnolia, Miss. He's the son of Stephanie Taylor, who was drawn to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in her early 20s and raised Davion and his older brother Ladarris on the teachings of the religion. Friday nights were for tranquility of mind in keeping the Sabbath. The family prayed, studied the bible and watched Christian programming.

Saturdays were reserved for church.

As a kid, Taylor frequently attended the youth practices of his friends — just to watch and study the game.

He eventually went out for the middle school football team. His coach, John Culpepper, can still recall the first time he spotted Taylor, who was all of

120 pounds at the time.

"A little bitty fella," said Culpepper, who would later be his varsity coach his senior year at South Pike. "You sometimes overlooked them when they're that small. But not him. You could see he had all the talent in the world."

At South Pike High, he prepared like he was a starter and went through all the drills, even if he wasn't going to see the field. He was like another coach out there.

For Friday night home games, the routine was pretty much the same: Prepare the Gatorade, help line the field and set up the equipment. He would have the pregame meal with the team, wish them luck and head home before sundown.

His friends texted updates. When he had a chance, he'd watch the game film.

"I know that I could've helped get us a win or make plays," he said.

In his senior season, Taylor suited up in one game, since it was an early kickoff and well before sunset. From his safety position, he remembers having an interception and 10 tackles.

Mostly, though, it was just the grind of drills.

"As I was practicing, I just kept thinking, 'This will just make my story even better,'" said Taylor, a state champion sprinter and triple jumper in high school who missed the state meet his junior year because it was held on a Saturday. "I was like, 'I'm going to try out somewhere.'"

When he turned 18, his mom left his path up to him — his decisions were his to make, she said. He wanted to play football on the next level even if that meant playing on a Friday or Saturday.

"You have to give them rope," his mom said. "I always wanted to see him strive to be the best."

Taylor wants this to be clear: He wasn't choosing football over his faith. His religion remains of utmost importance to him. He was trying to make both fit harmoniously into his life.

"If I'm doing this good and

making it this far, I felt like God is on my side when it comes to this," Taylor said. "He wouldn't bring me this far just to let me fail and not be on my side."

The dilemma: Getting recruiters to take notice with basically no game film. Culpepper put in a good word for him at Coahoma, a school that was featured in an episode of the football documentary "Last Chance U" for a losing streak.

"I told coaches, 'He's an athlete. Teach him to play, he'll be great,'" Culpepper said.

As a walk-on at Coahoma, Taylor was nearly cut. He said he earned one of the last spots.

His freshman season he started the final three games as he moved to linebacker. His sprinter's speed and raw ability attracted the attention of the Buffaloes, who told him they were interested.

Taylor turned in a monster sophomore season with 87 tackles. He was rated the top junior college outside linebacker in the country.

More schools expressed interest: Ole Miss, Arkansas, Baylor and Vanderbilt, to name a few. He honored his commitment to the Buffaloes after they showed early faith in him.

Taylor enrolled last January and went through spring practice while also competing in track. He finished sixth at the Pac-12 championships in the 100 meters.

To improve on the track, he studies the technique of Jamaican standout Usain Bolt, the world-record holder in the 100 and 200.

To improve on the field, the junior watches the moves of Broncos great Von Miller. Taylor is a hybrid linebacker in Colorado's scheme and came up with a fumble recovery in the 33-28 win over Nebraska.

"He's really catching on," Colorado coach Mike MacIntyre said. "Every day you see the light bulb go off a little more."

Especially in practice, where he's long excelled.

"I just see myself getting better and better," Taylor said. "It just gives me more and more belief that I can make it."

Love out for game

The Mercury News

STANFORD, Calif. — In a potential blow to his Heisman Trophy chances, Stanford running back Bryce Love will miss Saturday's game against UC Davis because of an undisclosed injury.

Coach David Shaw said that Love and left tackle Walker Little will miss the Aggies game but should be back Sept. 29 against Oregon.

"Don't anticipate Walker and Bryce being extended, but it's a wise decision to hold those guys out this week," Shaw said at his weekly press conference. "This was a very, very physical football game (last Saturday against USC) and we had a lot of guys with bumps and bruises."

After a slow start to the season — he was held to 29 yards against San Diego State — Love tallied 136 yards and a touchdown in 22 carries last Saturday against USC. A game against an FCS opponent could have been a prime opportunity to improve his rushing totals.

Shaw doesn't reveal specific injury information. Love was met head-on by two Trojans defenders on his final carry with 1:31 remaining and left the field.

The senior dealt with ankle injuries last season but missed only one game, a 15-14 win at Oregon State.

Senior Cameron Scarlett, a Pac-12 honorable mention selection last season after rushing for 389 yards and eight touchdowns, is expected to start in Love's place. Juniors Trevor Speights and Dorian Maddox will also be in the mix.

Shaw also said that backup lineman Foster Surrell is expected to be out three to four weeks.

But the injury news wasn't all bad — Pac-12 honorable mention center Jesse Burkett should make his season debut against UC Davis.

Yzerman resigns as Tampa GM

Associated Press

Steve Yzerman stepped down as general manager of the Tampa Bay Lightning after building them into a perennial contender, handing the reins to longtime assistant Julien BriseBois just two days before training camp.

Yzerman will move to a senior adviser role working under BriseBois and he said he was “100 percent committed” to the Lightning this season. Beyond that, Yzerman’s future is cloudy and BriseBois is now in charge.

“I feel this change in role is important for me to allow me to spend more time with my family and to still make sure the Lightning is managed to the level everyone has come to expect,” Yzerman said Tuesday. “We are all delighted that Julien is our next GM. He is more than ready.”

It was a surprising move for a powerhouse team, one that reached the Eastern Conference final last season. The 53-

year-old Yzerman spent the past eight seasons as Tampa Bay’s GM, a tenure that included five playoff appearances, three trips to the conference final and an appearance in the 2015 Stanley Cup final.

He said he came to the decision in late July not to sign another contract as GM and that it took until now to iron out details on what to do next. Yzerman’s family has remained in Detroit, and he commuted during his time on the job.

“We felt it was important to let everyone know what we were doing, end any potential speculation,” Yzerman said. “We have a plan here. We come up with a plan, we like our plan, let’s put it in place.”

The plan is the 41-year-old BriseBois, who had been an assistant to Yzerman since they joined the Lightning in 2010. For a number of years, he has been considered a future NHL general manager, and owner Jeff Vinik said the Lightning

were lucky BriseBois wasn’t hired by someone else.

Instead, BriseBois takes over a team that should contend for years to come.

“It will be business as usual for the Tampa Bay Lightning,” BriseBois said. “The mission is going to be the same. That mission is to win the Stanley Cup.”

Tampa Bay is again one of the Cup favorites based on Yzerman’s stellar record of drafting, developing and acquiring players. He promoted Jon Cooper to head coach in 2013, resigned captain Steven Stamkos and locked up defenseman Victor Hedman to a long-term deal in 2016. He also traded for J.T. Miller and Ryan McDonagh at last year’s trade deadline and got Nikita Kucherov signed to an extension this summer.

Yzerman, a Hall of Fame center with the Detroit Red Wings who won the Cup three times as a player, went into management immediately after retiring.

QB Allen to start for Bills

Associated Press

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — For the Buffalo Bills, Josh Allen’s time is now.

Bills coach Sean McDermott said Wednesday the rookie quarterback will make his first career start on Sunday against the Los Angeles Chargers.

“It’s the right move for our team,” McDermott said.

Allen replaces second-year pro Nathan Peterman, who struggled badly in a 47-3 blow-out loss to the Baltimore Ravens in Week 1. Peterman threw for 24 yards and two interceptions before being replaced by Allen in the second half.

McDermott declined to elaborate on his thought process behind the decision, instead saying it was “the right move” for his team more than 10 times.

“I don’t feel the need, honestly, to elaborate,” McDermott said. “We talk a lot in house about decisions and things and what we’ve got to do and the right move at the right time and right now, with all respect to your question, this is the right move for us.”

The Bills hoped to bring Allen along at a calculated and methodical pace after drafting him seventh overall this spring. Allen has a strong arm and ideal physical tools, but has been considered a developmental project. The Bills, however, were forced into making a change following one of the worst losses in franchise history.

“I’m excited for him,” McDermott said. “I’m excited for our football team and excited to see and watch him prepare this week more so than anything at this point.”

Young lineup shines as US beats Mexico

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The Americans are testing young players to get the United States back to the World Cup in 2022. Tyler Adams, Antonee Robinson and goalkeeper Zack Steffen are giving glimpses they might be able to help.

Adams scored his first international goal, four minutes after Angel Zaldivar was ejected for a studs-up tackle, and the United States rebounded from a poor first half for a 1-0 victory over Mexico on Tuesday night, the Americans’ first win over their rival in three years.

“We wanted to show our character and pride for the country, and we went out there and battled at times,” Adams said. “Maybe at the beginning the soccer wasn’t there completely, it got a little chippy at times, but we handled ourselves well.”

Adams, a 19-year-old who made his national team debut last November, scored after Kellyn Acosta passed to a sprinting Robinson on the left flank. Robinson crossed for Adams, who one-timed the ball from the penalty spot past goalkeeper Hugo Gonzalez.

“He’s a winner this kid, and I think I’ve been really pleased in terms of his growth with the ball in tight spots,” U.S. interim coach Dave Sarachan said. “We know that he can run and cover ground and win tackles and compete. But at the next level now can you do the next part? And

that’s have a presence with the ball and picking your spots so it just keeps getting better.”

The left-footed Robinson, burned by Douglas Costa with a cross that led to Brazil’s opening goal in a 2-0 loss Friday, had replaced right-footed Eric Lichaj at left back in the 56th minute.

“I just saw the defenders dropping really deep toward the goal so I cut it back across so hopefully someone could get on the end of it, and thankfully Tyler did,” Robinson said. “And it was a really great finish.”

Adams called Robinson’s cross good timing with the ball trickling right to him.

“So watching it was like in slo-mo, the ball just came to me and I was able to finish it,” he said.

Mexico played a man short after Zaldivar took down U.S. captain Wil Trapp in the 67th minute, and the U.S. immediately surged in its attack.

U.S. midfielder Weston McKennie was replaced in the 40th minute after what appeared to be a non-contact injury to his left knee. McKennie will have a scan Wednesday.

The U.S. now has three wins, two losses and three draws under Sarachan, who took over last October after Bruce Arena quit when the Americans failed to qualify for the World Cup.

The Americans had two losses and a tie in their previous three matches against Mexico, including a home defeat and a road draw in World Cup qualifying.

Red Sox 1st to secure spot in playoffs

Associated Press

BOSTON — The Red Sox became the first team in the major leagues to clinch a playoff berth and did not celebrate.

“Any time you make the playoffs and give yourself a chance to be that last team, it’s a pretty special thing,” Brock Holt said. “We’re excited by that, but we’ve got more work to do.”

Holt pinch hit in the seventh inning and hit a go-ahead, three-run homer in a 7-2 win over the Toronto Blue Jays on Tuesday night that guaranteed Boston no worse than a wild card berth.

At a major league-best 99-46, the Red Sox lead the AL East by nine games with 2½ weeks left. Their postgame celebration was lining up for routine high-fives and heading back to the clubhouse.

“We’re in great position to win the division and then to accomplish other things,” first-year manager Alex Cora said. “As I told the group, I’m very proud of them.”

Starter Chris Sale came off the disabled list and pitched one scoreless inning, strik-

ing out two and throwing 26 pitches. Sale has been slowed by inflammation in his left shoulder, and the Red Sox had said they would ease their ace back into action.

“We’re taking care of the guy,” Cora said.

Boston assured its third straight post-season team, matching the Red Sox teams of 2003-05 and 2007-09.

Ryan Brasier (2-0) pitched 1⅓ hitless innings as Boston used seven relievers.

Toronto led 2-0 in the seventh, when Steve Pearce hit a tying triple and Holt followed with a two-out home run off Ryan Tepera (5-5).

Kevin Pillar had an RBI single for Toronto during a two-run sixth, when Devon Travis scored the game’s first run on a double-steal and botched defensive play by the Red Sox.

Toronto’s Randal Grichuk was back in the lineup, two days after he crashed face-first into a guard’s metal chair. Concussion tests were negative on Grichuk, who was left with a bloody nose, swollen left eye socket and a few facial cuts.

Starters: Toronto starter Ryan Boruki, who allowed seven runs and eight hits July 13 at Fenway Park, held an opponent to two runs or fewer in at least six innings for the third time in four starts.

“He was tremendous today,” manager John Gibbons said. “He’s done a tremendous job for a rookie call-up.”

No rush: Sale continued tossing in the bullpen after he was pulled, trying to rebuild his arm strength for the postseason. He was hoping to get a second inning, but Cora said it didn’t make sense because the Red Sox weren’t going to let him throw more than 40 pitches.

“This is the first step in the right direction,” Sale said, crediting the Red Sox medical staff. “There was a lot of work by a lot of people that went into this.”

Mr. Clutch: Holt also homered as a pinch hitter on Aug. 13 at Philadelphia.

“I guess I would rather be in there from the start than to come in and pinch-hit,” Holt said, “but if I keep on hitting homers then I’ll take it.”

MLB roundup

Marte drives in 4 to lift D-backs past Rockies

The Associated Press

DENVER — Ketel Marte was told his playing time would decrease. A struggling bullpen was informed their roles would be juggled.

They responded in a big way.

Marte drove in four runs, including a two-out, two-run triple to break a sixth-inning tie, reliever Yoshihisa Hirano helped Arizona weather a ninth-inning scare for his first big league save and the Diamondbacks pulled closer in the NL West standings by beating the first-place Colorado Rockies 6-3 on Tuesday night.

The Diamondbacks cut their deficit in the division to 2½ games. The Rockies maintained a 1½ -game advantage over the Los Angeles Dodgers, who lost for a second straight day in Cincinnati. Colorado is chasing its first NL West crown in franchise history.

“We needed to win a game,” said reliever Brad Ziegler, whose team stopped a three-

game skid. “It doesn’t matter how it happens as long as we walk away happy at the end of the night.”

With Marte, the plan is to use Daniel Descalso a little more down the stretch. Marte made his case to remain in the lineup with his league-leading 11th triple. He also added a two-run single in the eighth for a 6-3 lead.

Angels 1, Rangers 0: Blake Parker gave up Isiah Kiner-Falefa’s single to right with one out in the eighth inning to end host Los Angeles’ no-hit bid by relievers in victory over Texas.

Astros 5, Tigers 4: Jose Altuve homered on the game’s first pitch, and Houston powered past host Detroit.

Marlins 5, Mets 3: Jacob deGrom took his latest hard-luck loss in a record-setting season, getting outpitched by visiting Miami’s Jose Urena.

Nationals 3, 7; Phillies 1, 6 (10): Juan Soto hit a solo home run in the 10th inning, his second of the game, to lead host

Washington to a doubleheader sweep.

Padres 2, Mariners 1: Wil Myers lined an RBI double off major league saves leader Edwin Diaz with one out in the ninth inning to lift visiting San Diego.

Braves 4, Giants 1: Mike Foltynewicz pitched a six-hitter to win for the first time in nearly a month, Charlie Culberson hit a two-run homer after entering as an injury replacement and Atlanta sent host San Francisco to its 10th straight defeat.

Indians 2, Rays 0: Josh Donaldson went hitless in his Cleveland debut, Edwin Encarnacion reached 30 homers for the seventh straight season and the Indians beat host Tampa Bay.

Cleveland lowered its magic number to three for a third straight AL Central title.

Reds 3, Dodgers 1: Former Dodgers prospects Brandon Dixon and Scott Schebler homered, and Los Angeles stumbled for the second straight night in a loss to lowly host Cincinnati.

Athletics 3, Orioles 2: Mike Fiers remained unbeaten in an Oakland uniform, working six solid innings against host Baltimore.

Cubs 3, Brewers 0: Jose Quintana pitched three-hit ball into the seventh inning, Victor Caratini drove in two runs and host Chicago regained its two-game lead in the NL Central.

Twins 10, Yankees 5: Joe Mauer hit a grand slam to highlight a six-run fifth inning, and host Minnesota beat New York for the first time in 10 meetings.

Royals 6, White Sox 3: Brad Keller pitched seven strong innings to win for the fourth time in six starts, leading host Kansas City past Chicago.

Cardinals 11, Pirates 5: Cardinals rookie Tyler O’Neill hit a three-run homer during a six-run eighth inning, Marcell Ozuna drove in three and Miles Mikolas pitched seven solid innings to lift host St. Louis.